

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-31. By the present response, claims 1, 3-10, 12, 15-17, 19-22, 24-29, and 31 have been amended, and claim 30 has been canceled without prejudice. Accordingly, claims 1-29 and 31 remain pending. In light of the foregoing amendments remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims.

Rejection Under § 102

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Seto et al. reference (U.S. Pat. No. 6,175,488). Applicants, however, respectfully assert that the rejected claims, as amended, are patentable because they recite features not disclosed by the Seto reference. In light of the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Anticipation under Section 102 can be found only if a single reference shows exactly what is claimed. *Titanium Metals Corp. v. Banner*, 778 F.2d 775, 227 U.S.P.Q. 773 (Fed. Cir. 1985). For a prior art reference to anticipate under Section 102, every element of the claimed invention must be identically shown in a single reference. *In re Bond*, 910 F.2d 831, 15 U.S.P.Q.2d 1566 (Fed. Cir. 1990). To maintain a proper rejection under Section 102, a single reference must teach each and every element or step of the rejected claim. *Atlas Powder v. E.I. du Pont*, 750 F.2d 1569 (Fed. Cir. 1984). Thus, if the claims recite even one element not found in the cited reference, the reference does not anticipate the claimed invention.

Independent Claim 1 and the Claims Depending Therefrom

Amended independent claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, a component cover comprising “a *coupling mechanism* to secure a *portion* of the component cover *detachably* to the portable computer housing; and a *force-displaceable coupling mechanism* to secure a *remaining portion* of the component cover *detachably* to the portable computer housing, wherein the force-displaceable coupling mechanism *biases* the coupling mechanism into engagement with the housing.”

First, the Seto reference fails to teach a *force-displaceable coupling mechanism*, as set forth in the instant claim. Instead, Seto et al. teach coupling members 65a and 65b and latches 63a and 63b. See Seto et al. column 8, lines 30-37. However, the coupling members 65a and 65b function as hinges having a fixed rotational axis, thereby precluding any sort of *force-displaceable coupling functionality*. Moreover, the Seto reference explicitly teaches that the “latches 63a and 63b are detachably *hooked* on the front end portion of the peripheral walls 5a of lower housing 5.” See Seto et al., column 8, lines 32-34. Applicants emphasize that the *hooked* functionality of the latches 63a and 63b does not necessarily equate to or suggest a *force-displaceable coupling mechanism*, as set forth in the instant claim.

Second, the Seto reference is absolutely devoid of any force displaceable coupling mechanism functioning to *bias* another coupling mechanism into engagement with the housing, as set forth in the instant claim. In sharp contrast, the Seto reference discloses a front cover 21 coupled to a housing 4 via coupling members 65a and 65b and latches 63a and 63b. See Seto et al. column 8, lines 30-37. However, neither the coupling members 65a and 65b nor the latches 63a and 63b provide any sort of *biasing* against one another or any other coupling mechanism, as set forth in the instant claim.

Third, the Seto reference discloses a top cover that is *hingeably connected* to the housing 4 by the coupling members 65a and 65b, which *prevent detachment* of the front cover 21 from the housing 4 as recited in the instant claim. *See* Seto et al., column 9, lines 16-23; *see also* Seto et al., Fig. 6. Seto et al. state that “[t]he front cover 21 is thus *coupled* to the housing 4 by means of the coupling members 65a and 65b...[i]f the front cover 21 is raised and turned to lie over the keyboard 24, the coupling members 65a and 65b are *bent* in U-shape.” *Id.* (Emphasis added). The coupling members 65a and 65b act as a hinge. Accordingly, the front panel 21 is merely *displaced* with respect to the opening portion 35, but is *never detached* from the housing. By way of analogy, an open door is not *detached* from its frame, rather the door is merely *repositioned* from one fixedly coupled position to another. Accordingly, Applicants emphasize that the front cover 21 of Seto et al. is neither explicitly nor suggestively detachable from the housing in the manner set forth in the instant claim.

Because the Seto reference does not disclose all of the features recited by independent claim 1, Applicants respectfully assert that this claim and its respective dependent claims 2-11 are patentable over the Seto reference. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims are respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 12 and the Claims Depending Therefrom

Amended independent claim 12 recites, *inter alia*, a component cover comprising a “force-actuated coupling mechanism and at least one *coupling mechanism cooperative with the force-actuated coupling mechanism* to mount the component cover *detachably* to the device housing.”

First, the Seto reference fails to teach a *force-actuated coupling* mechanism, as set forth in the instant claim. Instead, Seto et al. teach coupling members 65a and 65b and latches 63a and 63b. See Seto et al. column 8, lines 30-37. However, the coupling members 65a and 65b function as hinges having a fixed rotational axis, thereby precluding any sort of *force-actuated* coupling functionality. Moreover, the Seto reference explicitly teaches that the "latches 63a and 63b are detachably *hooked* on the front end portion of the peripheral walls 5a of lower housing 5." See Seto et al., column 8, lines 32-34. Applicants emphasize that the *hooked* functionality of the latches 63a and 63b does not necessarily equate to or suggest a *force-actuated* coupling mechanism, as set forth in the instant claim.

Second, the Seto reference is absolutely devoid of at least one *coupling mechanism cooperative with the force-actuated coupling* mechanism to mount the component cover *detachably* to the device housing, as set forth in the instant claim. In sharp contrast, the Seto reference discloses a front cover 21 coupled *undetachably* to a housing 4 via coupling members 65a and 65b and latches 63a and 63b. See Seto et al. column 8, lines 30-37. As discussed above, the coupling members 65a and 65b may be rotatable and the latches 63a and 63b may be detachably hooked, but the coupling members are *not cooperative* with the latches to mount the front cover 21 *detachably* to the housing 4, as set forth in the instant claim. In both open and closed positions of the front cover 21, the coupling members 65a and 65b are *undetached* from the housing 4.

Thus, the Seto reference does not disclose all of the features recited by the instant claim. Accordingly, independent claim 12 and its respective dependent claims 13-21 are

patentable over the cited reference. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims are respectfully requested.

First Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, the Examiner, in the first obviousness rejection, rejected claims 2-4, 8, 11, 13-15, 19, 22-25 and 28-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seto et al. in view of itself. Secondly, the Examiner, in the second obviousness rejection, rejected claims 5-7, 9-10, 16-18, 20-21, 26, 27 and 31 under the same section as being unpatentable over the Seto reference in view of Official Notice. Applicants respectfully assert that because the instant claims recite features not found in the Seto reference, the instant claims are patentable.

Prior to addressing the substance of the Examiner obviousness rejections, Applicants address the Examiner's assertion of what is obvious and well-known to those of ordinary skill in the art. To the extent that the Examiner's obviousness rejections can be interpreted as a taking of Official Notice, Applicants hereby seasonably traverse the Examiner's use thereof, in accordance with section 2144.03 of the M.P.E.P.

Returning to the substance of the Examiner's rejections, the burden of establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness falls on the Examiner. *Ex parte Wolters and Kuypers*, 214 U.S.P.Q. 735 (PTO Bd. App. 1979). If the Examiner combines the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention, a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established absent some teaching or suggestion supporting the combination. *ACS Hospital Systems, Inc. v. Montefiore Hospital*, 732 F.2d 1572, 1577, 221 U.S.P.Q. 929, 933 (Fed. Cir. 1984). Accordingly, to establish a *prima facie* case, the Examiner must not only show that the

combination includes *all* of the claimed elements, but also a convincing line of reason as to why one of ordinary skill in the art would have found the claimed invention to have been obvious in light of the teachings of the references. *Ex parte Clapp*, 227 U.S.P.Q. 972 (B.P.A.I. 1985).

Applicants address the rejected claims, in turn, below.

Dependent Claims 2-11

Dependent claims 2-11 each depend from independent claim 1. As discussed above, the Seto reference does not disclose all of the features recited by amended independent claim 1. As discussed above, the first embodiment disclosed by the Seto reference (i.e. Figures 1-7 and their supporting text) fails to teach a *force-displaceable coupling* mechanism, much less a force displaceable coupling mechanism functioning to *bias* another coupling mechanism into engagement with the housing, as set forth in independent claim 1. Neither the coupling members 65a and 65b nor the latches 63a and 63b provide any sort of *biasing* against one another or any other coupling mechanism, as set forth in claim 1. As discussed above, the first embodiment disclosed by the Seto reference also fails to disclose a front cover 21 that is *detachable* from a housing 4. Accordingly, the first embodiment of Seto et al. does not disclose all of the features recited by the instant claims. Applicants also emphasize that the second embodiment of the Seto reference (i.e. Fig 8) fails to disclose all of the features recited by the instant claims for the same reasons provided above with reference to the first embodiment.

The discussion of the second embodiment disclosed by the Seto reference begins at column 10, line 27 and carries over to column 11, line 23. With respect to this embodiment, the Seto reference states “[a]ccording to this structure, too, the front cover 21 is coupled to the housing body 20 by means of *coupling members 65a and 65b* of rubber-like elastic

material.” See Seto et al., column 11, lines 16-20. As discussed above, there is no reason to believe that these *coupling* members 65a and 65b in any way facilitate a *force-displaceable coupling* functionality, much less one functioning to *bias* another coupling mechanism into engagement with the housing 4, as set forth in independent claim 1. Additionally, these bendable members suggest an assembly that is *hingeably* coupled, and, as such, the front cover 21 of Seto et al. *always* remains coupled to the housing 4. Accordingly, the front cover 21 in the second embodiment (Fig. 8) of Seto et al. is not detachable as set forth in the instant claim.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that the instant claims are patentable over the Seto reference. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims are respectfully requested.

Dependent Claims 13-21

Dependent claims 13-21 each depend from amended claim 12. As stated above, amended claim 12 recites, *inter alia*, “force-actuated coupling mechanism and at least one *coupling mechanism cooperative with the force-actuated coupling mechanism* to mount the component cover *detachably* to the device housing.” Again, as discussed above, neither of the disclosed embodiments in the Seto reference discloses a front cover 21 having a *force-actuated* coupling mechanism, much less one *cooperative* with a coupling mechanism to mount the front cover 21 *detachably* to the housing 4, as set forth in independent claim 12. Rather, the Seto reference suggests a front cover 21 that is *hingeably secured* to its housing 4, such that the front cover 21 remains *continuously attached* to the housing 4. Accordingly, claims 13-21 are patentable over the Seto reference. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 22 and the Claims Depending Therefrom

Independent claim 22 recites, *inter alia*, "providing a *detachable* quick-release cover for the portable computer housing to cover the opening." As discussed above, the Seto reference does not disclose a *detachable cover*, but rather the coupling members 65a and 65b *prevent detachment* of the front cover 21 from the housing 4. Accordingly, the Seto reference does not disclose all of the recited features of the instant claim, and, as such independent claim 22 and its respective dependent claims 23-26 and 28 are patentable over the Seto reference. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims are respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 29 and the Claims Depending Therefrom

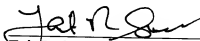
Independent claim 29 recites, *inter alia*, "[a] means for tool-lessly and detachably covering the means for top deck accessing." As discussed above, the Seto reference does not disclose any means for detachably coupling a cover, but rather the coupling members 65a and 65b *prevent detachment* of the front cover 21 from the housing 4. Accordingly, the Seto reference does not disclose all of the recited features of the instant claim, and, as such independent claim 29 and its respective dependent claim 31 are patentable over the Seto reference. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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